



Who Do You Trust On Social Media To Provide Accurate Information

If you have a question about your child's development, diagnosis, or treatment, how do you know if the information you find on the internet or receive via social media is correct?

Would you believe that 63% of the videos posted on the internet about treatment for infants and toddlers with feeding and swallowing were inaccurate?

Consider these questions before using information from the internet or received through social media.

Who is the source of the information?

- Consider the credentials of the person sharing the information including academic degrees, certifications, specific training on the topic, and relevant experience. If the purpose is to sell you a product or service, consider another source.

What research supports the information?

- Treatments should be based on current research from more than one source. The research should be published in professional journals, not just popular magazines. If you are unsure, seek more information.

How is the research relevant to children from birth to 3 years of age?

- A treatment method may work for older children, but that doesn't mean it is effective for infants and toddlers. Look at the group the research is studying.

How does the claim take into consideration the important role of parents, caregivers, and their everyday activities?

- Research has shown that all young children learn and develop through participation in everyday life routines and activities with the adults who are most important and responsive to them. Early intervention that relies only on therapists or teachers to work directly with the child may not be keeping with current research.

What is the cost of using the information you find?

- Examine the costs (both time and money) of treatments found on the internet and social media. In addition to the cost to your insurance or wallet, consider the time needed by you and other family members compared to what you are already doing or could learn to do within your daily activities that can have similar outcomes.

Who should you trust?

- Consult your child's doctor as well as respected professional organizations. These organizations promote carefully examined research-based interventions and many have reliable information specifically for families on their websites.

Some reputable organizations include:

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Occupational Therapy Association, Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and Zero to Three.